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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 7001st meeting of the Security Council, held on 16 July 2013, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Peace and security in Africa", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council reaffirms its concern about the alarming situation in the Sahel region and its commitment to address the complex security and political challenges in this region that are interrelated with humanitarian and developmental issues as well as adverse effects of climate and ecological changes. The Security Council welcomes, in this context, the deployment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) following the transfer of authority from the African-led International Support Mission in Mali to MINUSMA on 1 July 2013.

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of countries of the Sahel region.

"The Security Council continues to be gravely concerned about the activities in the Sahel region of terrorist organizations, including Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa and reiterates its strong condemnation of the recent terrorist attacks perpetrated in the region. The Security Council considers sanctions an important tool in countering terrorism, and underlines the importance of prompt and effective implementation of its relevant resolutions, in particular, Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) as key instruments in the fight against terrorism. The Security Council also expresses its continued concern over the serious threats to peace and security posed by armed conflict, proliferation of arms, transnational organized crime including illicit activities such as drug trafficking in the Sahel region and its increasing links, in some cases, with terrorism. In this regard, the Security Council reiterates its call for a full implementation of its resolution 2017(2011).

"The Security Council strongly condemns the abuses of human rights and violence against civilians, notably women and children, committed in the region by terrorist and other extremist groups.

"The Security Council recognizes that the strengthening of State institutions, inclusive economic and social development, respect for human

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rights and the rule of law are necessary to ensure long-term security, development and stability in the Sahel region.

"The Security Council underscores the importance of a coherent, comprehensive and coordinated approach encompassing governance, security, humanitarian, human rights and developmental aspects to resolve the threats to peace and security across the Sahel region as well as to address the root causes of these challenges and welcomes, in this regard, the development of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel as requested by its resolution 2056 (2012) and the three strategic goals defining the strategy.

"The Security Council welcomes the efforts of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Sahel region in the development of the United Nations Strategy and in drawing attention on the situation in the Sahel region as well as in mobilizing resources and support for the Sahel region's immediate and long-term needs. The Security Council also welcomes the Special Envoy's proposal to partner with relevant international and regional financial institutions to promote innovative approaches and initiatives for the Sahel region and, in this regard, encourages the Special Envoy to foster more coherent and coordinated United Nations support for the Sahel region. The Security Council also encourages the Special Envoy to pursue his efforts and good offices in order to enhance trans-regional and interregional cooperation and international assistance toward the Sahel region.

"The Security Council also welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) in support of States of the Sahel region.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of a coordinated approach by all concerned United Nations entities involved in the implementation of the United Nations Strategy for enhanced cooperation with a view of maximizing synergies. The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to ensure effective implementation of the United Nations Strategy through close collaboration between the Office of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Sahel region, UNOWA and relevant United Nations entities working in the Sahel region, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The Security Council further requests UNOWA to establish an effective and detailed coordination mechanism to prioritize activities and to ensure coordinated implementation by the United Nations System of the United Nations Strategy.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of national and regional ownership of the United Nations strategy and recognizes the importance for the United Nations Strategy to be implemented in close consultation with States of the Sahel, West Africa and the Maghreb as well as with the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States (CENSAD), the European Union (EU), regional financial institutions, including the African Development Bank (ADB) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), and other bilateral donors and partners. The Security Council stresses further the

importance of avoiding duplication of efforts and the need for strengthening collective engagement across the Sahel region.

"The Security Council calls on Sahel, West African and Maghreb States to enhance interregional cooperation and coordination in order to develop inclusive and effective strategies to combat in a comprehensive and integrated manner the activities of terrorist groups, to prevent the proliferation of all arms and to curb transnational organized crime including illicit activities such as drug trafficking. The Security Council encourages, in this regard, the holding of follow up activities building on the conclusions of the United Nations Conference on Border Control and Cooperation in the Sahel and the Maghreb organized in Rabat. The Security Council emphasizes the importance of regional and international coordination in addressing the threat of terrorism in the Sahel region, including information sharing and close cooperation between the United Nations, the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, the AU and other relevant organizations and initiatives.

"The Security Council commends the efforts undertaken by Sahel States and relevant regional organizations in addressing the humanitarian challenges in the region as well as in strengthening resilience. The Security Council also commends the support provided by countries in the region and by other donors and calls for their continued assistance to Sahel States to this end. The Security Council applauds the efforts of the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sahel, with the support of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, other humanitarian actors and agencies, to draw attention to the scale of the challenges facing the Sahel region, provide humanitarian assistance to the affected populations and build and strengthen resilience at local, national, and regional levels with the aim of reducing the impact of disasters.

"The Security Council welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to hold a High Level Meeting on the Sahel on the margins of the 68th General Assembly of the United Nations. The Security Council welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to visit the Sahel region, later this year, with the President of the World Bank Group and looks forward to a briefing to the Security Council following this visit.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to keep it informed of the progress toward the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel no later than 31 December 2013, and to present a written report no later than 30 June 2014."